

## Impact Statement

Haylee Wisinski, Grade 11

***"Hey Beautiful!"***, 2024.

Colored pencil, marker, gouache on cardboard, 15 x 9 inches.

Hopewell Valley Central High School, Pennington, NJ

Unsung Hero: Hedy Lamarr

At first, what made me choose Hedy Lamarr wasn't all too notable. I liked how she was a famous actress who lived a double life, and I had an idea that I was excited to explore. But once I started researching and planning, I became more interested in her story and was inspired. I felt connected to her feeling of restlessness and wanting to do more. She looked at the world and when she saw things, she saw ways to improve them. And I find that very inspiring. I also feel a little sad thinking about how she, along with many other women, were cast aside because of who they were. I wanted to give power back to her.

I wanted to design something that resembled an old Hollywood movie poster with dramatic colors and sizings. I tried to create a visual hierarchy that represented her story, where her acting career and looks were what most people saw. Then, her World War II efforts and the plane representing her interaction with Howard Hughes. She saw the plane's square-shaped wings and thought they were too slow, so created a design based on the fastest bird wings and fish fins. Third in line is her in low light with papers sprawled beneath her. This is the lowest point because it's what people discredited her for. Moving onto the text, the title "Hey Beautiful!" is a catcall because of how she was treated based on her looks. The rest is to further solidify that idea of being overlooked while resembling an old Hollywood poster.

To create this piece, I used a base of cardboard and started with a base layer of markers. I then painted over it in gouache and did touchups in colored pencil. I focused on each section having a specific color palette and sectioned them off with the markers. I did her "glam" look with reds, I did the plane with yellows, and her at the bottom with greens and blues. This helped me when I started painting because the colors from the markers would come through when I painted over it and would help with harmonizing the colors. The cardboard as the base added cohesiveness throughout the whole piece with its brown color shining through.

Creating this artwork opened the doors for future illustrations of mine. I want to experiment more with different bases that may not seem like the first choice. I would also like to experiment with more combinations of mediums to see the different effects they'd have. Along with that, it was fun to implement her story into the overall composition as a whole. I also found making it about a specific person has caused me

to look at the stories of what's around me rather than what they may look like at face value.

I would like to encourage others to dive deeper into the stories of those around them because it will allow for further connection and may open the doors for exploration. I love to tell stories and want to tell more stories to other people, whether those stories are real or not. This has rekindled my motivation and I want to continue to explore that.